



*Image of The Pumphouse in Aldeburgh credit Britten Pears Arts*

## **Britten Pears Arts announces Aldeburgh Festival's Pumphouse series and the Second Big Day Out**

Britten Pears Arts' presents a different side of the 2026 Aldeburgh Festival at the Pumphouse every Friday and Saturday throughout the Festival in June. Big Day Out returns for the second year running and celebrates the birthplace of the Festival in Aldeburgh with a day of free music and family events.

The Pumphouse is just a few minutes' walk from the centre of Aldeburgh and is a repurposed industrial building that now provides a quirky, offbeat and charming venue for some unexpected sides of the Festival. This year's events include jazz, folk, Indian classical and African music, alongside comedy, new classical works and puppetry for the whole family. The Pumphouse Launch Party on 11 June kicks off the fun with events over three weekends on 12, 13, 19, 20, 26 and 27 June.

Alongside the Pumphouse performances, there's great locally-sourced food too, courtesy of The Suffolk Horse Box, who will be serving up tasty treats from 5pm – 11pm each day. Whether you're letting your hair down with a drink, or spending quality time with the family, everyone is invited and very welcome.

On Saturday 13 June, Big Day Out returns and offers live music across two stages in Aldeburgh - Moot Hall Green and Fishers Gin - that includes folk, brass, blues, country and more. At Jubilee Hall book little ones into music and play sessions for the under 5s, get kids into dance, singing or percussion with free workshops, and do facepainting

at Moot Hall Green. At the South Lookout Tower set up a beach picnic to samba music and do some pebble painting – the choice is yours. You might also encounter Daniel, a beautifully crafted 8-foot puppet who gifts dandelions, each with a positive message, and invites audiences to join him in gentle interactions as he walks around town. All activities are free but please be aware that some require booking and capacity is limited.

**Andrew Comben, Chief Executive, Britten Pears Arts** commented, 'The Pumphouse series is much loved for its intimate and relaxed atmosphere where audiences can experience a different side of the Festival. It's exciting to be able to showcase such an eclectic mix of artists from rising local talent such as the contemporary jazz Cameron Scott Quintet; Indian classical from Ranjana Ghatak; kora playing from Suntou Susso; a special jazz set from classical pianist Steven Osborne and cabaret from star tenor Nicky Spence. The Pumphouse is a place where audiences can discover something unexpected and enjoy the Festival in a completely different way. The Big Day Out on the opening Saturday of the Festival promises everything from family activities, a chance to get involved, music, food and hopefully some sunshine! We really hope to see you in Aldeburgh in June.'

### Detailed Programme Information

#### The Pumphouse

##### First Weekend: 12 & 13 June

- [CAPP](#): Young Artists from the Britten Pears Young Artist Programme present new work developed during the week-long CAPP (Composition, Alternative Performance and Performance Art) course in December 2025. Six new works will be performed for the first time. The evening will conclude with performances from the **House of Bedlam** ensemble (12 June, 7pm).
- [Suntou Susso and Robin Torbitt](#): **Suntou Susso** is a singer percussionist and master of the kora - the 22-string West African harp. Born into a renowned Gambian family of storytellers and peacekeepers, Suntou brings centuries of musical tradition to the stage, weaving it together with his own contemporary style. The evening begins with an intimate solo kora set, before being joined by his trio of piano and drums. Support comes from Suffolk singer-songwriter **Robin Torbitt**, whose stripped-back atmospheric folk has been turning heads across East Anglia (13 June, 7pm).

##### Second Weekend: 19 & 20 June

- [Flo Redmonds Quartet and Cameron Scott Quintet](#): A night featuring two local rising stars of contemporary jazz: the **Cameron Scott Quintet** and **Flo Redmond's Quartet**. Rising saxophonist Flo Redmond's Quartet brings her powerful tone, inventive improvisation and striking technical fluency to the stage. The Cameron Scott Quintet are an exciting new ensemble whose unusual horn line-up and fiercely responsive rhythm section create a sound that's both eclectic and boldly original. Renowned pianist **Steven Osborne** best known for his classical career, gives a rare late night 30-minute jazz performance (19 June, 7.30pm).
- [Norwich Puppet Theatre presents Thumbelina](#): Hans Christian Andersen's tale of a girl no bigger than a thumb and her encounters with a frog, mouse, mole and swallow. Using traditional glove, rod and shadow puppets, performer **Helen Vine** leads Thumbelina to find ultimate happiness in the kingdom of flowers. The creative team includes director **Mark Mander** and designers **Karen Torley** and **Rene Baker** (20 June, 3pm; suitable for aged 2+ and their families).
- [Iona Lane and Ranjana Ghatak](#): Drawing on **Iona Lane's** deep roots in British folk and **Ranjana Ghatak's** classical and devotional Hindustani training, the pair create music shaped by their connections to landscape and place, from the remote peninsula of Knoydart to the rivers of Bengal and the streets of London. Expect rich harmonies, rhythmic exploration, and a striking blend of voice, harmonium and guitar as two distinct traditions meet in bold, collaborative form Norfolk-born- songwriter **Watkin Sharkey**, after a breakthrough year of touring across the UK and Europe, and with his debut album released this spring, offers honest, compelling songwriting with a voice all his own. The evening opens with **Milly Anna**, whose delicate indie-folk- songs and warm vocal harmonies offer an intimate and heartfelt beginning (20 June, 7pm).

##### Third Weekend: 26 & 27 June

- [Kate Griffin and Matchume Zango](#): UK banjo player **Kate Griffin** and Mozambique multi-instrumentalist **Matchume Zango** perform a vibrant, cross-cultural collaboration that celebrates the universal power of

traditional music. Fresh from the release of their debut EP Tchopo, recorded in Maputo, the duo bring a show full of energy, groove, and playful musical conversation. Expect shimmering banjo lines, rich percussion including timbila, xitende, mbira, and congas, and the colour and drive of their touring trio featuring **Evan Carson** on drums, **Ben Evans** on bass, and **Ford Collier** on low whistle and guitar. Support comes from Suffolk indie-folk artist **Samuel Taylor**, recently signed to No Roads Records at Old Jet (26 June, 7pm).

- [Clare Summerskill presents: Why God Created Lesbians!](#): In her brand new one woman show, **Clare Summerskill** dives into the mysteries of the perplexing sexual minority to which she belongs, asking the big question: why do lesbians exist? Are they here to ease pressure on cat rescue centres? Is it to ensure that Shibden Hall remains a viable tourist attraction? Or simply to write one woman comedy shows packed with songs, standup and storytelling? After decades of field research, Clare thinks she has finally cracked it. Expect silliness, satire and plenty of self-deprecation. Clare has written for BBC Radio 4's Weekending and Heated Rollers and toured her work throughout the UK and the US (27 June, 6pm).
- [Out Loud with Nicky Spence](#): A night of cabaret led by star tenor **Nicky Spence**, joined by **Britten Pears Young Artists**. Expect surprises, laughter, standout voices and a warm, anything-can-happen atmosphere that feels made for the Pumphouse. A night of great music, great mischief, and artists taking delight in stepping out of the familiar and into something fabulous. The night rounds off with a set from local drag artist **Ginni Tonix**, bringing the evening to a glittering, high spirited finale (27 June, 8.30pm).

### The Big Day Out, Aldeburgh, 13 June

#### Jubilee Hall

- **Mini Music Makers**: A fun session of music, play and exploration, featuring musical styles from nursery rhymes to rock 'n' roll and new music. For children aged 0-5 years old (9.30 – 10.30am).
- **DanceEast for Kids**: A dance workshop suitable for children of all levels (no experience need), led by friendly practitioners (11am – 12.30pm, free but booking required).
- **Youth Singing Workshop**: Watch young talent flourish. Under 19s can discover their voice in this workshop bursting with creativity and hosted by one of our leading singing practitioners (2.30 – 4.15pm, free but booking required).
- **Youth Open Mic**: An opportunity for you to have your moment, designed and delivered by our Youth Voice festival team (4.30 – 5.30pm).

#### Around Town

- **Walk of the Dandelion**: Meet Daniel, a beautifully crafted giant puppet made from willow and repurposed materials. He'll be walking around Aldeburgh town accompanied by **Charly Jolly's** playful and gentle live music, handing out handmade dandelions carrying positive messages. Head to Moot Green where everyone is invited to make their own woollen dandelions and write uplifting messages to share. Your creations become part of Daniel's journey as he passes them on to others, spreading hope, resilience, and delight (12.30 – 5.30pm).

#### Moot Hall Green Stage

Community music groups perform throughout the afternoon, bringing warmth and togetherness to the heart of Aldeburgh.

- **Rabble Chorus**: Enjoy a broad range of music from this popular community choir, from folk shanties to audience participation songs (2pm).
- **East Suffolk Community Folk Orchestra**: Celebrate the joy of collective music-making with a lively blend of jigs, reels and gentle folk melodies (3pm).
- **Waveney Brass Band**: Embark on a symphonic brass journey, from film themes to jazz-inspired favourites (4pm).
- **Pop Chorus**: This local community choir bring feel-good pop songs from across the decades in multi-part harmony (5pm).

#### Fishers Gin Stage

A spotlight on local musicians, showcasing heartfelt Americana, vibrant country pop, folk and high energy rock, for all ages.

- **Lisa Redford:** Heartfelt acoustic music blending country, folk and Americana with memorable melodies and stunning vocals (1.30pm).
- **Adam Clark Trio:** Talents from Norfolk's vibrant folk scene mix East Anglian and British Isles music with original material (2.30pm).
- **Vic Allen:** Combining the energy of pop with the storytelling nature of country music, transporting listeners through meticulously crafted lyrics (3.30pm).
- **Keeper of Calves:** A recognisable blend of folk tendencies and alternative-indie instrumentation, taking inspiration from Bon Iver to Hozier and The War On Drugs (4.30pm).
- **Black River Renegade:** High-energy rock played with real heart, blending classic blues-rock grit with a modern edge (5.30pm).

#### **South Lookout Tower**

- **Big Beach Picnic and New Samba:** Bring your picnic onto the beach and experience irresistible rhythms of New Samba with hands-on percussion fun for all ages and pebble-painting (12 – 1.30pm).
- **Percussion Workshops:** Explore percussion instruments with **Owen Gunnell** and members of the **Royal Birmingham Conservatoire** on the beach. These lively workshops are tailored to younger children and with the latter getting to create and perform their own music (1 – 1.45pm; aged 9 and under & 2 – 3.30pm; aged 10 and over; free but booking required at [brittenpearsarts.org/big-day-out](http://brittenpearsarts.org/big-day-out)).

**Pumphouse Tickets** on sale on Thursday 26 March at 10am.

**Big Day Out** is free and if booking is required this is specified.

**Images** can be downloaded [here](#).

**For further press information please contact:**

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#### **Notes to Editors**

##### **About Britten Pears Arts**

Britten Pears Arts is a pioneering music, arts and heritage charity based on the Suffolk coast at two popular, historic visitor destinations: The Red House and Snape Maltings. Britten Pears Arts emerged from the creative partnership of Benjamin Britten, one of the greatest composers of the 20th century, and his professional and personal partner, singer Peter Pears. Britten and Pears shared a progressive vision for music and the arts to be useful, helping people enhance and bring joy into their lives. Britten and Pears' vision inspires all our activity, from work with the local communities to our national leadership roles in the fields of talent development and music, health and wellbeing. [www.brittenpearsarts.org](http://www.brittenpearsarts.org)